

## Section 5 - Objective Assessment

All participants are to be provided an objective assessment that assesses **educational function levels** as well as identifies individual strengths and barriers, goals, interests, hard and soft skills, and need for supportive services. The objective assessment is a process, which includes a review of basic and occupational skills, prior work experience, education attainment level, employability potential and developmental needs.

The objective assessment

- Is an ongoing process and should not be viewed as a one-time event.
- Should include interviews, career guidance instruments such as Indiana Career Explorer, basic skills assessments, and observations.
- Can provide insight and guidance to both the case manager and the participant during development of the Individual Service Strategy.

### Determining Educational Functioning Level

WIA requires all eligible youth to be provided an objective assessment that includes an academic assessment. DWD has adopted use of the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) as the approved assessment of educational function level.

- If a youth has been assessed for basic skills deficiency in the previous six months, staff may use those results in lieu of re-testing. However, the results of the alternate test should be verifiable and documented. In addition the same test format must be available and administered for post-testing at a later date.
- Staff should use TABE versions 9-10 and the TABE Locator must be administered prior to administering the TABE Survey or TABE Complete Battery assessments.
- Based on the results of the Locator, the participant must be assessed with the appropriate level of TABE (Easy [E], Medium [M], Difficult [D], or Advanced [A]). The TABE Locator and the appropriate math, reading, and language sections must be administered following test-publisher guidelines.
- All staff who administer the TABE must have successfully completed training on its use. TABE must be interpreted for participants and should only be interpreted by staff that are trained to do so. TABE should be interpreted in a one-on-one setting.
- **Reasonable accommodations** must be provided, as appropriate, when assessing youth with disabilities. See the Testing Youth With Disabilities section of TEGl 17-05 and the CTB/McGraw-Hill accommodation guidelines for TABE 9 & 10 and TABE CLAS-E.

Origin of Educational Functioning Level - The National Reporting System (NRS) was developed by the U.S. Department of Education to implement an accountability system. The DOL Employment and Training Administration has adopted policies for "educational gains" based on those outlined in the NRS. These include educational functional levels, which are sets of skills and competencies demonstrated by students entering at that level. As outlined in the NRS, there are two sets of educational functioning levels – six levels for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and six levels for English as-a-Second Language (ESL) students. ABE levels roughly equate to two grade levels.

- Online TABE testing is the preferred format for assessing basic skills; however paper and pencil test may be used. The same format should be used for both the **pre-test** and the **post-test**.
- Raw TABE Scores are converted to determine the participant's educational function level automatically in the InTERS system.

#### **TABE Scale Score Conversions to Educational Function Levels**

<b>NRS ABE/ASE Level</b>	<b>Grade Level Equivalent</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Total Math</b>	<b>Language</b>
1. Beginning ABE Literacy	0-1.9	<368	<314	<390
2. Beginning ABE	2.0-3.9	368-460	314-441	390-490
3. Low Intermediate ABE	4.0 – 5.9	461-517	442-505	491-523
4. High Intermediate ABE	6.0-8.9	518-566	506-565	524-559
5. Low ASE	9.0-10.9	567-595	566-594	560-585
6. High ASE	11-12.9	>595	>594	>585

#### **High School Youth, including JAG In-School Participants**

- High school students already undergo a number of assessments while in school. Thus only the TABE Survey, which is a shortened version of the Complete Battery, should be administered to high school youth including JAG in-school participants. Staff must administer the TABE Locator prior to administering the TABE Survey. Based on the results of the Locator, the participant must be assessed with the appropriate level of TABE Survey.
- The TABE Survey is recommended for use with high school participants. However, if a more in depth assessment is desired or needed, the TABE Complete Battery may be administered.
- In-school youth who are enrolled in high school are excluded from the Literacy and Numeracy Common Measure.

#### **Out-of-School and Post-Secondary Youth**

- Currently DWD requires that out-of-school and post-secondary youth take TABE 9&10 Complete Battery in three subjects: total math (math computation and applied math), reading, and language. Effective July 1, 2012, the TABE Survey will be the required assessment and must be administered to eligible youth. However, if a more in depth assessment is desired or needed, the TABE Complete Battery may be administered.
- Staff must administer the TABE Locator prior to administering the TABE Survey or TABE Complete Battery assessments. Based on the results of the Locator, the participant must be assessed with the appropriate level of TABE.
- All **out-of-school** and **post-secondary** youth must have documentation of their **educational functioning level** recorded for the purpose of calculating the **Literacy and Numeracy Gains** performance measure.
- **Any out-of-school or post-secondary participant who tests at or below grade 8.9 in either the Literacy or Numeracy section will be determined to be basic skills deficient.**

**Post-testing participants enrolled for more than one year** - A basic skills deficient participant who receives services more than one year must be post-tested prior to the end of each program year up through year three and the results of each post-test will be counted in the calculation of the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance measure.

After three years, the participant no longer is counted in the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance measure.

- Any **out-of-school** or **post-secondary** participant who is determined to be basic skills deficient will be included in the **Literacy Numeracy Gains Common Measure**.
- **Basic skills deficient** participants must be **post-tested** at least once by the end of year one following the individual's date of first youth program service. The same assessment tool and method (i.e. paper or online) must be administered to the participant for the pre- and post-testing.
- Participants who are determined not to be **basic skills deficient** based on **pre-test** results are excluded from **post-testing**.

**Testing Interval** – Out-of-school participants must be post-tested at least once by the end of each year following the individual's date of first youth service until the youth is no longer basic skills deficient. There is no minimum test interval, but post-testing should only be done after instructional activity has occurred.

**Post-Test Administration:** Post-test administration should be determined when participants have received instruction and are motivated to do well rather than at the last opportunity for service.

**Reference:**

Workforce Investment Act of 1998

WIA Regulations, 20 CFR part 664

DWD Policy 2010-13 WorkOne Customer Flow

DWD Policy 2011-13 Indiana's Assessment Policy for Adult Education

TAB 2007-18 Testing for Basic Literacy Skills

TAB 2006-06, Change 1, Clarification – Out of School Youth Definition